

**Milwaukee District Garden Clubs
Fall Business Meeting & VIP Luncheon
Newcastle Place, Mequon
October 14, 2024**

DIANE OLSEN OPENED THE MEETING

- Nick Lemur was excused.
- Kitty Larson resignation as District Parliamentarian was accepted with regret.
- Cheryl Lausten was named as interim parliamentarian.
- Marsha Caporaso and Kerry Krokos will approve today's minutes.
- Because a flag was not available, there was no Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

- Laura Kopf, Previous State Director; Lynne Ehnert, Central Region Director; Nancy Gregory, 2nd Vice Director of WGCF; Cheryl Lausten, Previous Director of Central Region
- Katie Jackson is chairing the Nominating committee; Nominations due in May, and installation will take place in June.

OFFICER REPORTS

- Milwaukee District Garden Club Report (Diane Olsen)
Held executive committee meetings and two fundraisers.
Planted three native trees at VA near an ADA bench installed at the Hank Aaron Trail
- 1st Vice Director's Report (Marsha Caporaso)
Attended the flower show at the State Fair and the installation of the bench and trees at the Hank Aaron Trail
- Parliamentarian Report – Cheryl Lausten named interim parliamentarian.
- Treasurer's Report (Kerry Krokos)
The budget and a report clarifying the district's five individual CDs and their maturity dates. Kerry will check the interest rates for each. Additions are from Lynne Ehnert's (2025 project), Linda Curl's remaining allocation and a \$50 memorial for Judy Newman (designated to the scholarship fund)
Gave accumulated donations to Penny Pines
Supporting documents are available for review.
The detailed budget was distributed.
- Corresponding Secretary's Report (Norma McReynolds)
- Sending e-blasts monthly – what's happening
- Designed district flyers for Wisconsin Garden Foundation

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- Promoting local garden walks
- Working with Jan Blooming on state newsletter
- Keeping website current and with upcoming activities
- Established pay online option through Square (used three ½ times more often than mailing checks for bulb sale).
- Each Square transaction fee is 2.9% plus 30 cents.
- Square is available for all clubs in WGCF.
- Recording Secretary's Report (Janet Wintersberger)
Minutes from the Fall Meeting in October 2023 have been corrected by committee, circulated, and filed electronically.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Scholarship Committee (chair Nick Lemus)

- Although Nick was not present, he submitted an emailed request to MDGC:
Nick's motion was made, seconded, and approved that "\$85.38 be withdrawn from MDGC and moved to the current scholarship fund."

Blue Star Marker (Nancy Gregory)

- The project is a Blue Star Byway Memorial Marker along the Hank Aaron route (marks midpoint of route 30 between Washington state and Washington DC.)
- Requested \$750 from Blue and Gold Star Memorial Marker chair (Linda McCaffetry) to place a marker at Havenwoods State Forest. The cost to attach it to a boulder is \$600.

Bulb Sale Fundraiser (Kerry Krokos and Norma McReynolds)

- The sale netted \$1,133.70.

VA Grounds Tree Planting (Lynne Ehnert)

- Lynne Ehnert and Diane Olsen are working closely with the VA to choose three native trees appropriate for planting on the grounds in March 2025
A Nominating committee has been formed for the State.

BREAK

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GUEST SPEAKERS introduced by Marsha Caporaso

- WFCF Futures Committee (Guests: Karen Merlau, Sue Wallace, and Kathy Shaw)
its focus is how garden clubs can recruit, retain, and revitalize members.

Many clubs are small with older people. Younger people are not joining.

The committee has studied organizations that are growing.

The American Hosta Society consists of National, state, and local levels. On joining, a new member has an option of having a Hosta named after them – and 95% pay extra for that privilege. The Hosta Society is also doing reciprocal advertising, Hosta Society advertises in Daylily Society and Vice versa.

Wild Ones 45 years old; has 11,000 members.

Transitioned to all electronic

Trying to work more fun into their conventions

Giving discounts to partners, such as conservation-minded groups.

Offer mentors to new recruits. Monthly newsletter has an educational component, such as grant writing. Provide updates / informative things, such as Webinars and Deadlines

Provide metal signs for new members' gardens.

Kathy Shaw, Waushara County – a rural area

Formerly a Master Gardener group (2,200 members) became members of Waushara County Garden Club. Have fourteen gardens around the county.

Promotion

Changed metal UW-Extension signs to Waushara Garden Club

Created logo – state outline with club's name.

New members are given a \$15 T-shirt when they join. (Promotional words on backs)

Facebook Posters hung around county.

Those accessing Facebook receive a follow-up email for events; if no interest, names are dropped from mailing list after two years.

Created brochures.

Bookmarks listing upcoming events.

Use table-top displays at booths and at Health Fairs

Distribute UW Extension literature (public domain) with Waushara Garden Club identifier.

Local newspapers promote the organization and feature articles about its activities.

Collect email addresses (send notices for two years)

Use reciprocal advertising in other group's newsletters (I.e., Wild Ones)

Events/Activities

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The Seed Sharing Program in March will be open to the public.

National Night Out in Sheboygan - Attendees mostly first responders; Gave away succulents.

Food Fair

Parade Float (things member enjoy)

National Day of Caring

Step-by-Step recycling program; collecting plastic bags 1000 lbs of plastic = one bench – free advertising

Hummingbird gardening

Offered Resource Listing

The Future subcommittee's website – accessible at www.WisconsinGardenClub.org
Michigan Garden Clubs' Best Practices Membership Increase and Retention Manual is downloadable.

Be proactive about membership.

Consider using *Next Door* and/or *Meet Up* computer applications.

Personal approach most effective

Offer activities to attract younger gardeners and offer mentoring to new members.

LUNCHEON

MDGC REPORTS

Interim District Director – no report

1st Vice Director - arranged two district meetings.

2nd Vice Director/Treasurer - Fundraising for the district – fall bulb sale.

Kerry Krokos reformatted the financial reports.

Recording Secretary – no report

Corresponding Secretary – no report

AWARDS

- **VIP / Above & Beyond award** – Norma McReynolds – accepted responsibility for State Convention following death of Judy Newman
- **Mary Joe Wellinshine** – (Fox Point Garden Club) created a Natural Native Garden surrounding a creek. Recruited neighbors to get involved in removing trees.
- **Memorial for Judy Newman** – uses her favorite phrase, “If there’s a will, there’s a way.”

Lynne Ehnert Central Region Director – consists of seven states.

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2024 Convention in O'Fallon IL this week

2025 Central Region Convention, in conjunction with Flower Show Symposium (Kitty Larkin) six sessions

Laura Scoff – Hawthorn Park – Art of Functional Design. A Daffodil Park in Greendale. Involved children.

Hales Corners – theme Conserve to Preserve **100th** Anniversary; **planted** trees at Boerner Botanical Garden

Nancy Cody - Garden Club of Greater Milwaukee 197 members, 501 (c)3
80-100 members attend educational programs and luncheons from September through May. Community service oriented; also Hiking club, Book club, Tours, and Floral Workshops. Fundraiser - Partners with Garden Conservancy to host Open Days. \$10,000 profit this year goes toward scholarships.

Nancy Gregory – Town & Country has 25 members and holds two fundraisers (one a plant sale in May). The club sponsors a planter in Kenosha, offers a scholarship at Gateway. On Arbor Day a tree is planted at a public school. They have a nature preserve at Hawthorn Hollow and raised bed gardens for older residents at St. Matthew's. The club has a Blue Star marker at the Kemper Center.

Kitty Larkin – Western Acres

“A small but mighty garden club;” hosts the Flower Show at the Wisconsin State Fair.

Barbara White – Fox Point Garden Club

Toured members' gardens and Anderson Gardens. Planted daffodils around Lake Drive and established a prairie garden near Indian Creek. Will start seedlings for fifty children on Arbor Day and plant a tree.

MOTIONS

Habitat for Humanity - Lynne Ehnert moved to make Habitat for Humanity a permanent committee. The organizational Studies group will review making it a standing committee.

Norma McReynolds – Moved that MDGC (Milwaukee District Garden Club) study and research how the club can become a 501(c)3. Nancy Gregory seconded the move, and the motion passed. A committee will be formed, seek legal advice and file a form 980.

ADJOURNED

Respectively submitted,
Janet Wintersberger